# Clash of Civilizations: How China's Rise is Redefining the Global Order

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The pivotal question for the world today is how China will go about altering the global world order; as per the changes of Deng Xiaoping in 1978, China is predicted to have a GDP of 25 trillion dollars by 2025 and has grown to be the second biggest economy. It is these changes within the economy of China that signal a change in the global dynamics. The defining geopolitical question of the 21st century is if the global dynamic will change due to China's restructuring.

China's increasing share of global trade, substantial foreign direct investment (e.g., $69.93 billion in 2024), and growing military profile (I.e 6 generation jet launched in 2025) are all indicators of its enhanced international influence. Increased participation in international organizations and assertive diplomatic initiatives across various regions underscore its rise in the global hierarchy. Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis provides a relevant framework for understanding the potential for conflict and cooperation arising from this transformation.

**Confucianism vs. Western Values**

China's rise presents a significant ideological challenge to the West. While Western nations champion liberal values; democracy, human rights, and the rule of law while China prioritizes state sovereignty and rapid economic development. This difference is not simply about contrasting political systems; it reflects fundamental variations in governance and international relations. China's development model (p. 133), while delivering impressive economic results, has been criticized for its impact on human rights and environmental sustainability.

Conversely, Western models, though prioritizing social welfare and environmental protection, struggle with issues like economic inequality and political polarization, exposing loopholes in the "End of History" thesis. The global impact of this ideological divergence is the emergence of new multilateral institutions and economic cooperation arrangements (i.e. BRICS) that challenge the dominance of Western-led Liberal order. China's dissatisfaction with the existing liberal, rule-based order, as analyzed through the lens of Power Transition Theory. has led some U.S. scholars to label China a "revisionist" nation seeking to regain lost historical prestige.

To extend its influence, China has launched several initiatives. China's ambition to increase its economic and geopolitical power can be examined in BRI which is China's flagship project and includes CPEC. Other self-sustaining projects can be evaluated in

light of the 9 dash lines and the string of pearls strategy where South China and the jars of pearls (Indian ocean) work towards enhancing China's strategic influence. More recently, the Global Development Initiative (GDI) offers an alternative model of international development and cooperation.

China's expanding global presence inevitably generates cultural exchange and friction. The spread of Chinese investment, migration, and cultural products creates both opportunities and challenges. In regions like Africa and Latin America, Chinese investment has stimulated economic growth and raised concerns about the displacement of local businesses and the erosion of traditional cultures (I.e. Hambantota Port of Sri Lanka given to China on 99 years lease).

The global popularity of Chinese culture represents significant cultural exchange, yet nationalism in many recipient countries, fueled by concerns about cultural dominance, presents significant resistance. This underscores the complexities of globalization, cultural exchange, and the preservation of national identities. The economic balance of power is also shifting, with BRICS (34.92) now possessing a combined GDP exceeding that of the G7 (30.09), reflecting a potential challenge to the US-led global order.

The BRI is a particularly significant example of China's influence. It promises economic opportunities but also faces criticisms regarding debt sustainability, environmental impact, and transparency (such as the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, prioritize benefits rather than environmental issues). The long-term consequences for participating nations and the global order remain to be seen. Additionally, along with authoritarian nations china also influence the major democracy (China pressurized Australia to withdraw from QUAD, 2007-8), it simply means that China created asymmetric dependency of other over China economy.

The emergence the Chinas has opened up a never-before-seen level of challenge and opportunity to the world at large. Particular characteristics of the economic prowess, cultural strength, and other significant development initiatives coming forth are re-shaping the international environment. Many scholars have different perspective regarding China's rise (Kishore Mahbubani an Optimist believe in peaceful rise whereas John Mearshiemer a pessimistic view) While Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis offers a partial understanding of potential conflict, it's vital to acknowledge complexities. Successfully approaching this new era requires both mitigating the risks of conflict and maximizing the potential for mutually beneficial cooperation. The coming years will be crucial in determining the future global order.

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